UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/25093
14 January 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 11 JANUARY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 11 January 1993 from Mr. Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the violations of Iraqi airspace by the United States U-2 spy-plane.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

93-02414 3967e (E) 140193 140193

/...

Annex

Letter dated 11 January 1993 from the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer you to our many letters addressed to you, to your predecessor and to the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission concerning violations of Iraqi airspace by the United States U-2 spy-plane on the pretext of carrying out an aerial survey on behalf of the United Nations Special Commission.

You perhaps recall that the Special Commission notified the Iraqi side on 1 August 1991 that it had decided to conduct aerial reconnaissances of Iraq using a United States U-2 spy-plane operating from Saudi territory. On 6 August 1991, the Iraqi Government sent a reply to this letter objecting to the use of this aircraft, by force and in a quasi-combat role, over the territory of Iraq. It stated that the choice of a United States aircraft and an American pilot for this task confirmed suspicions that the aircraft's mission would be exploited for purposes other than those of the United Nations and, moreover, that the choice of the U-2 aircraft itself represented a violation of the undertaking given by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission in his letter of 15 May 1991 addressed to the Iraqi side stating that "the Government of Iraq may in each case designate an observer to accompany the team taking the aerial photography".

Most regrettably, the United Nations and the Special Commission took no notice of Iraq's legitimate objections, and the United States U-2 spy-plane began its violations of Iraqi airspace operating from Saudi territory on 12 August 1991. As of 10 January 1993, the number of such violations had reached 106, each of three to six hours in duration. With each violation and on each occasion, Iraq spared no effort to enlighten the United Nations and the Special Commission, with tangible evidence, as to the true function of the aircraft, namely to spy on Iraq for purposes connected with United States policy that bear no relation to the goals of the United Nations and the terms of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). In his meetings with the members of the Security Council in March and November 1992, Mr. Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister, stressed the hazards inherent in the continued use of the aircraft in a manner so inconsistent with the tasks and mandate entrusted to the Special Commission. The Deputy Prime Minister made it clear to the members of the Council that the use made of the aircraft had political and intelligence-gathering objectives that posed a threat to Iraq's security, and he urged a halt to the activities of an aircraft that was exploiting the cover provided by the United Nations to spy on Iraq and to advance political and intelligence-gathering purposes that bore no relation to resolution 687 (1991). The aircraft has nevertheless continued its dubious missions and has even added to them, inasmuch as it has recently increased its overflights to a rate of three a week.

A quick glance at the route taken by the aircraft during its 106 overflights of Iraqi territory indicates unequivocally that the targets chosen by it and the timing of its missions are dictated by the intelligence-gathering and political requirements of the United States and not by the needs of the Special Commission or the United Nations.

An example that demonstrates the veracity of this statement is the incident of 4 October 1991, when the aircraft's penetration coincided with the violation of Iraq's airspace by Israeli aircraft in such a way as to confirm that there were hostile goals underlying the apparent coincidence.

Similarly, the overflight by the aircraft on 5 April 1992 a few hours after the Iranian air raid on Iraqi territory brought confirmation of its espionage-related character inasmuch as its overflight for that day centred on the Iraq-Iran border area.

The aircraft's most recent violation of Iraq's airspace, on 10 January 1993, brings with it new proof of its hostile intelligence-gathering function, since the overflight was restricted to the southern area of Iraq on which the United States is enforcing an unlawful aerial exclusion that Iraq does not recognize. We are transmitting herewith a map of the route taken by this aircraft during its most recent violation, which clearly shows that its function on this flight along and to the south of the 32nd parallel was nothing other than observation and reconnaissance in full coordination with the warplanes of the United States fleets flying combat patrols in southern Iraq in violation of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, in breach of international law and in a manner that has no connection with the mandate of the Special Commission as set forth in Security Council resolution 687 (1991).

Such activities confirm that the aircraft in question is purely and simply a United States spy-plane and not a United Nations aircraft. Its overflights in Iraq's airspace in these circumstances create a technical dilemma. We therefore hope that you will exert your best endeavours for a halt to the activities of the aircraft in Iraq's airspace in present circumstances until the situation becomes clear.

(Signed) Hamid Yusuf HAMMADI
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq

Enclosure
Route taken by the United States U-2 aircraft on Sunday, 10 January 1993